

DRAFT ONLY – Minutes of May 5, 2011

ATTENDEES: Arnie Rosenblatt – Chairman, George Infanti, Mike Dell Orfano, Sally Wilkins, Rich Hart, Cliff Harris, and Charlie Tiedemann – Planning Director

Chairman Rosenblatt opened the meeting at 7:35 pm.

Minutes of:

April 20, 2011:

Line 68: Add after like ‘to ask some questions on the criteria for some financial information’

Line: 177: Change ‘Arnie’ to Alex

Line: 178: Add ‘Arnie said’ to: the parcel

Sally Wilkins moved to approve the minutes, Mike seconded. All in favor.

Scenic Road Public Hearing for Mack Hill Road and Austin Road: *Tree removal from Scenic Roads that are part of the reconstruction of those roads*

John St. Pierre, Technical Assistant for the Zoning Office and the Public Works Department (PWD) of Amherst, is here to discuss the trees that the PWD wants to remove on Mack Hill and Austin Roads.

John continued to give the work description. This is part of the \$ 15M road bond and was approved by the Town voters two years ago. This will improve drainage on Mack Hill Road including adding about 25 to 30 new catch basins and installing about 17,000 linear feet of underdrain. Also included is the replacement of cross culverts under Mack Hill Road and to bring them up to code. The goal is to make improvements to alleviate drainage issues. The plan is to grind down the existing asphalt surface and to install additional gravel prior to paving.

Tree removal is necessary for the excavation to improve drainage, and to remove trees that are diseased or dead, in the way, or leaning over the road. Some have roots in path of road work which will die during or after construction. This will allow trees near the right of way line to grow better.

This reconstruction work is being done on a tight budget and is designed to give the taxpayer the best product for their money. We will only remove trees that are necessary to be removed. Thank you for your time, are there any questions?

Mike noted that you see hundreds of amphibians squashed on this road. Will there be crossings for these critters? Will there be any critter crossings? John said he understands your concern, but this would be rather costly and reduce the maximum amount of overall road reconstruction we can do.

Mike said this is a Scenic Road and we need to balance human impact and natural need and our mission is to protect that. All of the maple trees are dying. The elms are now bug

infested and that makes me think this new chemical to prevent ice from accumulating with these new drainage installations will lead those chemicals away from the road.

John explained drainage will actually prevent ice from forming on the road. The Town uses brine to put down on road to prevent ice buildup. Mike said the Town is doing a great job in cutting back vegetation. Opposite from where Tully lives is a well established iris bed which will be disturbed. Is there anything that can be done to save it or accommodate it? John responded that he was not sure the PWD is taking it out. The plan is for things to naturally vegetate. Growth will regenerate itself where it used to be. I will make note of it and talk to Bruce Berry.

Mike asked about chemicals used and to please talk to DPW about what corrective action can happen. I'm also concerned about critter crossing. Species are being squished not just here but around the world.

Cliff said the Town doesn't have any money to replant but why wouldn't it not be part of the plan? It doesn't make sense to remove trees and not to replant. He is concerned about the critter crossings will the culverts be large enough to prevent washouts? A lot of areas now get clogged with leaves and debris. And how will you prevent frost heaves. George responded this has all been designed with their engineer, Keach-Nordstrom (KNA), and lot of new drainage is being put in. John said the issue is scenic road vs sound engineering for the road and the DPW doesn't want to destroy scenic trees, but they have to be removed in order to rebuild a proper road that won't have all the issues it has now. KNA has designed this reconstruction to do so.

Sally asked why, of all the roads to do, was this one first? George answered that in the 5 year plan this is the worst one. Mack Hill Road is horrendous. Sally said Mont Vernon Road is awful. This is a destructive road reconstruction and the Town has indicated people want to go with a more esthetic approach rather than engineering. John will pass this on to DPW.

Sally said if this were not a Town project, others would have to come to us with a environmental impact report. George mentioned that John is here tonight for the trees. Sally said the overall magnitude of the \$ 15M project and to have a \$1000 item for replacing trees would massively change the road. We need to look at impact on this road. There are trees that should be replaced. It is too warm here for Maple trees. Because of global warming you should take your kids to Parkers Maple Barn before they are gone.

Mike and Sally discussed the dying maple trees and replacing them for the climate change coming in the next 50 years. Why weren't all these trees numbered in sequence? John said these were given to me in three groups at different times. After the initial group DPW came back with 50 more and then 52 more. I apologize for the confusion.

Sally added that during the work going on, can they dig out the bittersweet from the trees that are getting strangled.

George said he knows abutters are concerned about the trees coming down we will be flexible with abutters and we will try to address their concerns. I did look at the trees and there are trees that are behind the trees. George said I'm sure John will pass this all on to DPW. We had numerous meetings with abutters on Spring Road we will try and make this project work.

Rich noted that one thing that came out in Master Plan was for sidewalks and bikes and people on foot and can we see if this could happen with this project. Sally said you would have to widen the road to get that. Arnie said upper Mack Hill Road is less of an issue, but you are at risk of being killed if you are riding or walking on lower Mack Hill Road.

Sally said one side of road could be widened. Mike asked if there was any plan by Indian Pond Lane to straighten out the curves? John responded that you would be destroying more trees.

Arnie asked for counts of the trees being taken down for drains, and one for dead trees, and one for trees hanging over the roads. John said no, not off the top of my head. I never looked at those numbers. Arnie asked why did they stop the reconstruction at those locations. John said you have to pick a logical stopping point. Mack Hill Road past Sprague Road, as I drove up there the pavement gets better.

Arnie said that assuming there is a dollar amount to save to replant trees. If you eliminated 100 feet on Austin Road and 100 feet on Mack Hill Road, would it give you more money? There is an incredible number of trees coming down and it's not a minor change and as the Planning Board is being asked to approve the appearance to have a functional road, then my vote would be have a less functional road rather than a completely functional road.

Sally suggests we should not vote on this tonight. Do the whole road at once. Sally explained that they will be back for more trees.

Arnie said this portion of Mack Hill Road is in unbelievably bad shape. Sally said Mont Vernon Road gets more traffic per day.

Sally wants motion. Arnie would like to see what ever money being spent to see them plant some replacement trees. Sally wanted to preserve the rural setting. Mike wants to look at the style of drainage. Sally said let's look at the cost of different culverts.

Arnie asked if there were any abutters? None.

Sally moved to table to May 18, Cliff seconded. George opposed. All others in favor.

Untable: Lot 6-50 Baboosic Lake Road and Spring Road: *Subdivision – Rough Diamond Development, LLC (John Dunn)*

George moved to untable, Sally seconded. All in favor.

Arnie explained why this was tabled, for a Drainage Study and AFD report. The Board looked over the new Drainage Report that John Dunn presented to them and the AFD report.

Sally said the recommendation from the Drainage Report is on page 6 and read the included attached letter.

Mike asked how difficult was it to build the driveways? John Dunn explained to him how its done with gravel. John also explained about heavy equipment. Mike asked about grades? I don't see grades on plans. Charlie told Mike it wasn't part of the last meeting's motion. Sally explained if the Fire Chief is happy then it's fine.

Cliff moved to approve the plan with changes, Sally seconded. All in favor.

Lots 4-148-3 and 4-150 Spring Road: *Lot Line Change* – John F. Dunn and Andrew and Nancy C. Pataky

I'm John Dunn presenting, my neighbor is Andrew, and he and I have discussed for a time getting access that he can use and I would be getting access because the brook cuts across his property. We took a walk and came up with this plan to exchange like amounts of land to make our lots more useful to one another. That's pretty much it. Are there any questions?

Mike was unable to visualize the exchange. John showed him a plan to help him understand. Mike asked if wetland is being traded for upland? John responded that we are both getting wetland but that doesn't change the usefulness of the lots. Sally says it does. John corrected Sally about the lot in that it is buildable. The building envelope for lot 3 gets larger. For the record lot 4-148-3 is currently a building lot.

George said it makes a good workable lot. Mike asked John which lot do you own? John helped Mike understand. Mike said if it creates more upland I don't have any problem.

Arnie asked if there were any abutters? None.

Cliff moved to approve the lot line adjustment, George seconded. All in favor.

Lot 2-50 NH Route 101A: *Revisions to Sign Masterplan* - Mareld Company Inc.

Paul Tripp, from Classic Signs, introduced and explained the revision to the Sign Masterplan. Replace the pylon sign using ¼ of the sign to allow area to list occupants in the building. Clients want their name on the sign by the street. They are not willing to spend money but want to attract patrons from the street. The change to the pylon sign is to increase the area to 80 square feet. The Ordinance has changed so that now we only have 500 square feet. The only difference is that the originally approved Sign Masterplan allowed second sign off premises,

183 but it was never installed by Caldwell Drive. We are removing that from our original
184 plan. Take off second sign from list. We have the sign closer to lot line. You have the
185 original drawing and we are under the percentage allowance. We want to move the sign
186 closer to 101A. The sign now is 19 feet from the curb. Our neighbor's sign Pasta Amoir
187 is 9 feet, and Atlas is 10 feet and all those are non- conforming. We are well behind theirs
188 with sight visibility. We have a Variance to allow this. Rich asked about the sign space
189 for 9 tenants but there are only 5 buildings, why? Paul stated there are upper and lower
190 units. He explained there can be as many as 22 tenants but there have never been that
191 many at any one time. Paul explained about what was allowed in the original proposal
192 that was approved and the new proposal. We are allowed 280 sq. ft. Gone from 800 to
193 273 sq. ft., but this still accommodates the tenants. He showed pictures of the proposed
194 signs.

196 George said the new restaurant sign jumps out at you and thinks it is important on the
197 road to be much safer than someone trying to drive and find a business, so this is an
198 improvement. Sally asked if they have the original calculations that should be valid.
199 Charlie corrected her saying now that they are changing and it has to comply with the
200 current Ordinance. Sally wanted to know why the sign was going to be white
201 background. Paul said the purpose is for people to see signs. Sally wants it green with
202 white letters. She asked if you are you familiar with the Meeting Place? We would be
203 looking for some plantings below this sign. Paul said there is a bed there already. He
204 showed her a picture of what it will look like. Charlie said be careful not to let things
205 grow up and block sight distance under the sign. Sally said juniper will remain low, but I
206 still am not happy with white panel. Cliff said put the street number on the sign. Paul
207 said they put the number on the edge of the sign for visibility, you will see it on the side
208 of sign.

210 Mike was confused and Sally read Mike page 3 of what was on the plan. Paul was asked
211 if there was a proposed plan for the new sign. He then showed them the picture again.
212 Sally said color is important in the Sign Masterplan. Mike asked do you understand issue
213 of lighted signs? Lights at night cause light pollution for the whole community. Light that
214 illuminates just letters and not whole panel is good. Paul has created that on the upper
215 part of the sign. The signage is designed to attract to the sign not to illuminate it. Mike
216 talked about LED lighting using Harbor Freight as an example.

218 Paul is not talking about the light source. Cliff said the sign is to be just letters lit not
219 having an all white panel. Prefer letters just be lit. Mike in the spaces that there is no
220 tenant what would you put it in there? Paul said white. Mike said so it would be white
221 strip with light shining thru. Paul explained if he's forced to put opaque in its going to
222 be jigsaw puzzle of light and dark. Tenants move in and out all the time. Most effective is
223 that I'm asking for something that I am allowed to have. I am being penalized and to
224 discriminate against us is not fair. Mike said we are really trying to make business needs
225 work for you as well as citizens of the Town. We are working to accommodate you. Sally
226 said translucent green panels. Paul is familiar with Meeting Place sign would that be
227 acceptable to you? Sally said I would like that. Mike noted we want it to look nice.

Arnie asked if there were any abutters? None. George said he has the right to do what he wants to do. If the owner will be willing to go with what you want that's fine I agree it would be more attractive. Paul stated he will get copies of the modified color panels.

George moved to approve a new sign understanding it to be opaque with white trim and letters, Mike seconded. All in favor.

Sally asked Charlie to make a note to look next year on the Sign Masterplan.

Paul showed the Board a guide model to help the Board to write codes to better design also gives you language that helps you to be able to say it. Please take it and use it.

Lot 11-16 Pulpit Road (Bedford, NH): *Conceptual Discussion of Subdivision –*
Kiddo Enterprises, LLC

Marc Vanson, from Bedford Design and representing the owner, Russ Goldman, to discuss a subdivision on the Bedford Town Line. Marc Vanson went over the proposal for Mr. Goldman's subdivision. Talked of major improvements for this subdivision's access and frontage. Explained about what type of class for the drives and what Bedford has. We have consulted with AFD, Amherst Schools, and Emergency Services. Charlie told us to get some things in writing from them. We also have a letter from the developer of Pulpit Road in Bedford in your file. He mentions about timing over the summer. Our proposal doesn't involve streets in Amherst.

Arnie said thank you, and noted that this is purely a conceptual discussion. Any questions from the Board.

George has been reading the letters from the Amherst Departments. Sally looked at a project years back of this same property that it would be a 'scattered and premature application'.

Mike then read letters of concerns for safety issues from some of the Amherst Department heads. They would have to drive 6 miles to reach these homes and the expense to the Town would be costly. Is there anyway to get Bedford to pick up service to this site? It's putting an extra burden on services to travel there and especially so if there is an incident in Town at the same time. The interest of the Town should be considered. Sally said we are supposed to tell them what the issues are. Mike said to go to Bedford. Sally said we have mutual aid with Bedford and they would be there first, but that doesn't address the school bus issue. Russ said he went to the School Department and to the bus company. Sally said that Mont Vernon pays for the service. Arnie said I think you got a sense of the issues. Rich noted that families living here will really be Bedford citizens.

Arnie said when you go forward there will be certainly a site walk. Marc said they are trying to balance wetland crossings with critter friendly culverts with heaters, lights, and phone service.

Arnie said thank you to the applicants.

Charlie gave out info on more paper for the Board to look at for the next meeting.

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276 *Cliff moved to adjourn at 8:50 pm, seconded by Sally. All in favor.*

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